



# NEWS RELEASE

GOVERNOR'S COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

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## BREDESEN FORMALLY LAUNCHES COVERKIDS PROGRAM



**Nashville** - Governor Phil Bredesen today traveled to a suburban YMCA in Nashville, the Bellevue Family YMCA and J.L. Turner Lifelong Learning Center, to officially launch CoverKids, which provides comprehensive health coverage to uninsured children who do not qualify for TennCare. BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee will administer CoverKids.

"Over 100,000 Tennessee children go without any health insurance every year. Starting today they are covered," Bredesen said. "CoverKids provides access to complete health care coverage for these children so they have the opportunity for a healthy start in life."

CoverKids offers comprehensive health insurance coverage for children 18 years-old and younger, similar to the benefits offered to dependents of state employees. Emphasis is placed on preventive care and services most needed by children, including vaccinations, well-child visits, healthy babies program, and developmental screenings. In addition, there are no pre-existing condition exclusions. To be eligible, applicants must be a Tennessee resident and a U.S. citizen or qualified legal immigrant.

Pregnant women under 250 percent of the federal poverty level who are otherwise eligible may apply for coverage, including pre-natal, delivery and postpartum care.

CoverKids features no monthly premiums, but each participant will pay reduced co-payments for services. A family of four with a household income of \$51,625 or less is eligible. Families above the income limit who wish to purchase coverage for their child can "buy in" to the program by paying monthly premiums.

Governor Bredesen's multi-pronged effort, Cover Tennessee, extends health insurance to uninsured individuals in Tennessee. CoverTN, the centerpiece of the initiative, is an affordable and portable health insurance initiative for working Tennesseans who are uninsured. Chronically ill adults are eligible for AccessTN, a high-risk pool. The Cover Tennessee initiative also targets the growing prevalence of diabetes through ProjectDiabetes and focuses on improved lifestyle choices through GetFitTN. The programs were overwhelmingly endorsed by the General Assembly in 2006.

More information on all Cover Tennessee programs is available at [www.CoverTN.gov](http://www.CoverTN.gov) or by calling 1-866-COVERTN.

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